

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-27 (Canceled)

28. (New) A secret information setting device for generating secret information and setting secret information in a plurality of appliances in a system using shared secret information that allows the appliances to communicate over a network, the secret information setting device comprising:

a generation instruction receiving unit that receives a secret information generation instruction from a user;

a secret information generation unit that generates the secret information in response to the secret information generation instruction received with the generation instruction receiving unit;

a secret information storage unit that stores the secret information generated by the secret information generation unit;

a secret information transfer unit that transfers the secret information stored in the secret information storage unit to the plurality of appliances; and

a secret information deleting unit that deletes the secret information stored in the secret information storage unit when a predetermined condition is satisfied.

29. (New) The secret information setting device according to claim 28, wherein the secret information generation unit generates the secret information based on internal information managed inside the device.

30. (New) The secret information setting device according to claim 28, further comprising:

an external information receiving unit that receives external information that is externally input in order to generate the secret information;

wherein the secret information generation unit generates the secret information based on the external information received by the external information receiving unit.

31. (New) The secret information setting device according to claim 30, wherein the external information receiving unit is an input device, such as a keyboard or a pointing device for data input.

32. (New) The secret information setting device according to claim 30, wherein the external information receiving unit is an image input device into which captured image information is input as the external information.

33. (New) The secret information setting device according to claim 30, wherein the secret information generation unit takes the external information received with the external information receiving unit as said secret information.

34. (New) The secret information setting device according to claim 30, wherein the secret information generation unit generates the secret information by arithmetically processing the external information received with the external information receiving unit.

35. (New) The secret information setting device according to claim 28,
wherein the secret information storage unit further stores the number of times that the secret information has been transferred to the outside; and
wherein the secret information transfer unit transfers the secret information to a number of appliances corresponding to the number of transfer times stored in the secret information storage unit.

36. (New) The secret information setting device according to claim 35, further comprising:

a transfer time setting unit for setting the number of transfer times that the secret information is transferred to the outside;

wherein the secret information storage unit stores the number of transfers set by the transfer time setting unit.

37. (New) The secret information setting device according to claim 35, wherein the secret information deleting unit deletes the secret information stored in the secret information storage unit, if the secret information transfer unit has transferred the secret information to a number of appliances corresponding to the number of transfers stored in the secret information storage unit.

38. (New) The secret information setting device according to claim 28, further comprising:

a clock unit that measures the time that has elapsed after a predetermined time and outputs this clock information; and

a time limit judgment unit that determines the integrity of the secret information stored in the secret information storage unit by comparing the clock information that is output from the clock unit with judgment reference information;

wherein the secret information deleting unit deletes the secret information stored in the secret information storage unit based on a determination of the time limit judgment unit.

39. (New) The secret information setting device according to claim 38, wherein the clock unit measures the time that has elapsed from the time when the secret information generation unit has generated the secret information.

40. (New) The secret information setting device according to claim 38, wherein the clock unit measures the time that has elapsed from the time when the secret information transfer unit has first transferred the secret information.

41. (New) The secret information setting device according to claim 40, wherein the time limit judgment unit determines an appliance type to which the secret information transfer unit transfers the secret information, and sets the judgment reference information based on that appliance type.

42. (New) The secret information setting device according to claim 40, wherein the time limit judgment unit determines a function type that is carried out using the secret information, and sets the judgment reference information based on that function type.

43. (New) The secret information setting device according to claim 41, further comprising:

a type value receiving unit receiving input of a type value representing the appliance type;

wherein the time limit judgment unit sets the judgment reference information based on the type value received with the type value receiving unit.

44. (New) The secret information setting device according to claim 42, further comprising:

a type value receiving unit receiving input of a type value representing the function type;

wherein the time limit judgment unit sets the judgment reference information based on the type value received with the type value receiving unit.

45. (New) The secret information setting device according to claim 41, wherein the judgment reference information is an upper time limit based on that type value.

46. (New) The secret information setting device according to claim 42, wherein the judgment reference information is an upper time limit based on that type value.

47. (New) The secret information setting device according to claim 45, further comprising:

an extension instruction receiving unit that receives an instruction to extend the upper time limit;

wherein the time limit judgment unit changes the judgment reference information in response to an extension instruction received with the extension instruction receiving unit.

48. (New) The secret information setting device according to claim 46, further comprising:

an extension instruction receiving unit that receives an instruction to extend the upper time limit;

wherein the time limit judgment unit changes the judgment reference information in response to an extension instruction received with the extension instruction receiving unit.

49. (New) The secret information setting device according to claim 28, wherein:

the secret information storage unit stores the number of appliances to which the secret information has been transferred by the secret information transfer unit; and

the secret information setting device further comprises a transfer number display unit that displays the number of appliances stored in the secret information storage unit.

50. (New) The secret information setting device according to claim 28,

further comprising a power supply unit that supplies power for a predetermined time to the secret information storage unit;

wherein the secret information storage unit stores the secret information only as long as power is supplied to it from the power supply unit.

51. (New) A communication system using shared secret information to allow a plurality of appliances to communicate over a network, the communication system comprising:

a secret information setting device according to claim 28, which is not connected to the network;

wherein the secret information setting device generates the secret information, and sets the secret information in the plurality of appliances without using the network.

52. (New) The communication system according to claim 51, wherein the secret information setting device is a portable device.

53. (New) The communication system according to claim 51, wherein the secret information setting device is a mobile phone terminal.

54. (New) The communication system according to claim 51, wherein the secret information setting device is a remote control for a home appliance.

55. (New) A secret information setting method for generating secret information and setting secret information in a plurality of appliances in a system using shared secret information that allows the appliances to communicate over a network, the secret information setting method comprising the steps of:

- receiving a secret information generation instruction from a user;
- generating the secret information in response to the received secret information generation instruction;
- storing generated secret information in a secret information storage unit;
- transferring the secret information stored in the secret information storage unit to the plurality of appliances; and
- deleting the secret information stored in the secret information storage unit when a predetermined condition is satisfied.

56. (New) A program for a secret information setting method for generating secret information and setting secret information in a plurality of appliances in a system using shared secret information that allows the appliances to communicate over a network, the program performing on a computer a secret information setting method comprising the steps of:

- receiving a secret information generation instruction from a user;
- generating the secret information in response to the received secret information generation instruction;
- storing generated secret information in a secret information storage unit;
- transferring the secret information stored in the secret information storage unit to the plurality of appliances; and

deleting the secret information stored in the secret information storage unit when a predetermined condition is satisfied.

57. (New) A computer-readable recording medium storing a program for a secret information setting method for generating secret information and setting secret information in a plurality of appliances in a system using shared secret information that allows those appliances to communicate over a network, the secret information setting method comprising the steps of:

- receiving a secret information generation instruction from a user;

- generating the secret information in response to the received secret information generation instruction;

- storing generated secret information in a secret information storage unit;

- transferring the secret information stored in the secret information storage unit to the plurality of appliances; and

- deleting the secret information stored in the secret information storage unit when a predetermined condition is satisfied.